REMARKS:

Claims 1 and 10 have been amended.

The rejection of claims 1-4, 6, 8-14 and 16-17 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Burns et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,048,269, "Burns"), is respectfully traversed. Amended claim 1 is limited to (emphasis supplied):

(A) a gaming machine comprising:

(1) a display arranged to display a credit amount;

(2) a medium generator arranged to generate a medium comprising a machine-readable validation code to the exclusion of a machine-readable credit amount;

(3) a reader unit arranged to read the validation code from the medium; and

(4) a network interface;

(B) a network; and

(C) a central authority arranged to store the validation code and a credit amount received from the network in response to generating the medium, arranged to validate the validation code and arranged to transmit the stored credit amount through the network to the interface in response to validation of the validation code, the credit amount being displayed on the display.

Burns fails to teach this novel combination. Burns generates a bar code representing the monetary value of the value of the credit stored in the particular slot machine 200 on the cash out slips 220, along with a randomly generated number in order to permit the CPU 100 to verify the validity and unique identification of the cash out slip 220 at a later time (Col. 6, lines 21-29). Upon insertion of the cash out slip 220 into the bar code reader 206, the bar code reader 206 transmits a signal to the CPU 100 corresponding to the bar code, and the PCU 100 compares the bar code 222 on the particular cash out ticket with those stored in its memory which contains the value of the cash out slip, the unique identification, and its status (Col. 6, lines 30-36).

In contrast to the Burns teaching, claim 1 is limited to a medium generator arranged to generate a medium comprising a machine-readable validation code to the exclusion of a machine-readable credit amount. This feature offers advantages over the Burns teaching. For example, by using the claimed feature, a player has no chance to alter the credit amount represented by the bar code, because the credit amount is not represented by the bar code.

In the Response to Arguments (page 5 of the Office Action), the Examiner states that Burns discloses a cash teller readable credit account in the amount of $25.50 on the medium of ticket at Figure 2. However, as pointed out above, Burns does not exclude a machine readable credit amount from his ticket, but rather includes such an amount. This is the opposite of the claimed feature. Claim 1 is allowable on this grounds alone.

Burns also does not teach transmitting the stored credit amount through the network to the interface in response to validation of the validation code as claimed.

Burns relies on the ticket amount already sent by the gaming machine from the ticket, an amount that may have been altered by the player.

In the Response to Arguments, the Examiner states:

> Burns discloses sending bar code information from the host CPU to a networked device, such as a ticket printer (6:17). Burns also includes the bar code includes information, such as amount of winnings (abstract, lines 3-6). Therefore, the claimed invention fails to preclude Burns's invention.

The section of Burns relied on by the Examiner (Col. 6, lines 17-28) states (emphasis supplied):

> The printer 208 prints a bar code as directed by the CPU 100. Such printers are well known. In the preferred embodiment of the present invention the bar code printer 208 is commercially available from Star Micronics.
>
> The printer 208 prints a bar code 222 on the cash out slips 220 responsive to the instructions from the CPU 100. The CPU 100 generates the bar code to be printed. <u>The bar code 222 represents the monetary value of the value of the credit stored in the particular slot machine 200</u> on the cash out slips 220, along with a randomly generated number in order to permit the CPU 100 to verify the validity and unique identification of the cash out slip 220 at a later time.

Nothing in this section of Burns (or any other section of Burns) teaches or suggests that a central authority transmits a stored credit amount through a network to

an interface in response to validation of a validation code as claimed. At best, Burns teaches that printer 208 prints a bar code as directed by the CPU or in response to instructions from the CPU. However, the CPU does not transfer a credit amount stored in a central authority, because "bar code 222 represents the monetary value of the value of the credit stored in the particular slot machine 200..." Thus, a credit amount stored in a central authority is not transmitted through a network to an interface as claimed.

Lines 3-6 of the Abstract add nothing to the teaching in Col. 6, lines 17-28 relevant to claim 1.

Claim 1 is limited to features that offer advantages over Burns, and which deserve patent protection. For all the foregoing reasons, claim 1 is allowable over Burns.

Claims 2-3 are dependent on amended claim 1 and are allowable for the same reasons as claim 1.

Regarding claim 4, in the Response to Arguments, the Examiner states:

> Burns discloses a network connection from the slot machine game to the bar code printer to print out a cashout ticket (Figure 1-2). Further, as stated above, it is an implicit feature that Burns has a manual cashout signal in order to generate a cashout ticket showing a cashout dollar amount after the player has finished playing the gaming machine.

The Examiner's use of the word "implicit" is equivalent to rejecting claim 4 because the subject matter of claim 4 is inherent in Burns. As stated in MPEP 2163.07(a):

> To establish inherency, the extrinsic evidence 'must make clear that the missing descriptive matter is necessarily present in the thing described in the reference, and that it would be so recognized by persons of ordinary skill. Inherency, however, may not be established by probabilities or possibilities. The mere fact that a certain thing may result from a given set of circumstances is not sufficient.'

Burns does not inherently or implicitly teach a manual cashout signal in order to generate a cashout ticket . The cashout ticket could be generated by a variety of techniques other than generation of a manual cashout signal. Reading into Burns a manual cashout signal is to rely on mere possibilities, which is contrary to the MPEP.

Claim 6 also refers to a cashout signal and is allowable for the same reasons as claim 4.

Claim 8 depends on claim 1 and is allowable for the same reasons as claim 1.

Claim 9 is limited to storing a medium type and transmitting the medium type to the interface in response to validation of the validation code. The undersigned has been unable to find any teaching or suggestion of this novel feature. As a result, claim 9 is allowable. The Examiner does not appear to address this point in his Response to Arguments.

Claims 10-14 are analogous to claims in the group 1-4. Claims 16-17 are allowable for the same reasons as claims 8-9.

The rejection of claims 7 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Burns in view of Stockdale et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,251,014; "Stockdale") is respectfully traversed. Claim 7 is dependent on claim 4 (and claim 1) and is allowable

for the same reasons as claims 4 and 1. Claim 15 is dependent on claim 13 (and 10) and is allowable for the same reasons as claims 13 and 10. Claim 7 reads:

7. (Currently Amended) A gaming system according to claim 4 wherein the central authority is arranged to service a plurality of gaming machines including a plurality of interfaces and wherein the central authority transmits to the ~~interface~~ interfaces through the network ~~a~~ validation ~~code~~ codes before ~~a~~ cashout ~~signal is~~ signals are generated.

Claim 7 is limited to a "central authority arranged to service a plurality of gaming machines..." There is no such central authority taught or suggested by Stockdale.

Claim 15 is limited to a plurality of gaming machines:

15. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 13 wherein the gaming system comprises a plurality of gaming machines and wherein the validation code created by generating the machine readable validation code is stored in a plurality of the gaming ~~machine~~ machines before ~~the~~ cashout ~~signal is~~ signals are generated in the plurality of gaming machines.

Stockdale does not teach or suggest such a plurality.

Regarding both claims 7 and 15, Stockdale does not teach or suggest an apparatus or method in which validation codes are stored in a plurality of gaming machines.

Stockdale does not teach any validation code, much less a machine-readable validation codes as claimed. Stockdale speaks of information stored in response to "critical events." Transmitting validation codes as claimed does not occur in response to a critical event. As a result, no one skilled in the art would be motivated to combine

Stockdale with Burns in the manner suggested by the Examiner, and claims 7 and 15 are allowable.

For all the foregoing reasons, each of claims 1-4 and 6-17 defines patentable subject matter, and early allowance is solicited.

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